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Book Notices.

STUDIES IN HEBREW METER.¹

Professor Sievers adopts without formal discussion the view, set forth by Ley and others, that the principle of Hebrew rhythm is accentuatory. In fact, Bickell's syllabic scheme, D. H. Müller's apparatus of respirations, concatenations, etc., and Grimme's supplementary system of moras find few advocates today; and Sievers trusts to the phenomena themselves to furnish the evidence for the theory he accepts. In many details, of course, he agrees with the results of preceding writers, though he rejects their methods. Ley's excellent work he holds to be defective in that it lays the stress wholly on the accent (thus reducing the rhythm to a mere series of beats) and takes no account of the unaccented elements of the verse. It is this lack that Sievers here proposes to supply; his work is a study of the nature of the rhythmical foot, the employment of the various feet in the verse, and the construction of periods and strophes. To this investigation he brings the methods of a practiced metrist: he assumes that, after critical sifting, every rhythmical fact—every foot and every syllable—is to be accounted for by the strictest application of the general laws of meter, and in obedience to Old Testament usage. "Old Testament" is not synonymous with "Masoretic;" like all critics, he departs from the Masoretic pointing and accentuation when metrical and grammatical considerations appear to demand it. Two points have to be settled at the outset: the extent of the rhythmical material of the Old Testament and the accuracy of our present Hebrew text. He accepts as metrical not only what is usually regarded as poetical and the mass of the prophetic writings, but also a good deal of the prose narrative matter, claiming that old chronicles are often metrical, that there is no clear traditional line of demarkation between "poetry" and "prose" in the Old Testament, that style and vocabulary do not here come into consideration, and that, in fine, only the ear can decide the question. In this general position he is doubtless correct, but he sometimes pushes his claim for rhythm too far, as in the first chapter of Jonah and in certain prophetic passages; yet these cases are too few to affect his general results. He also uses texts that are certainly corrupt; he is aware of the danger in this direction, but holds that it is overridden by his large induction from fairly well certified facts.

¹ METRISCHE STUDIEN. I. STUDIEN ZUR HEBRÄISCHEN METRIK. ERSTER THEIL: UNTERSUCHUNGEN. Von Eduard Sievers, Mitglied der Königl. Sachs. Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften. Des XXI. Bandes der Abhandlungen der philologisch-historischen Classe der Königl. Sächsischen Gesellschaft der Wissenschaften Nr. I. Leipzig: B. G. Teubner, 1901, viii + 399 pp. M. 12.

Of the vast array of interesting details in this volume only a few general points can be considered here. Sievers insists on the necessity of reading metrical passages aloud and beating time—only in this way, he properly says, can the melody be felt and the rhythmical character be determined. The unit of meter is the foot (which corresponds to the bar in music), and a foot he defines, not as an iambus or a trochee, etc., but as consisting of a certain number of syllables; vocal š'wa is to be reckoned in general as forming, with its consonant, a separate syllable—a fact that, under the influence of Hebrew grammarians, has generally been ignored. The movement of Hebrew rhythm he holds to be pre-vaillingly ascending (of the nature of the anapæst); periods are sometimes monostichal, usually distichal. Sievers classifies single lines or stichs by the number of feet (beats) of which they consist, calling them “zweier,” “dreier,” etc., thus avoiding the misleading words “dimeter,” “trimeter,” etc.; convenient English terms are “binary,” “ternary,” etc. He has an interesting discussion of the quinary (Ley's elegiac pentameter, Budde's qina-measure), pointing out (as Grimme before him had done) that it is employed in other than elegiac verse, while, on the other hand, other meters are used in elegies (for example, in Lam., chap. 1 and parts of chap. 4). In the discussion of the verse Sievers's special merit is the thorough investigation he makes of the relation between arsis and thesis, the rising and falling inflections of voice; much of his argumentation turns on the question of how many unaccented syllables may stand before an accent. With this is connected his instructive discussion of proclitics and enclitics, his theory of simple prolongation of tone and prolongation with severance (*Zerdehnung*), and his inquiry into retraction and protraction. One of his more important deviations from the traditional accentuation is the occasional accenting of a segholate on the last syllable, and this innovation he supports by an inquiry into the origin of segholate forms (the two prehistoric types, oxytone and barytone). In the metrical treatment of such forms everything depends on the ear, and while the possibility of oxytone segholates in the Old Testament must be admitted, opinions will differ as to the accentuation in particular cases. Sievers discusses a number of other phonetic and morphological questions that are of practical interest for metrical science, such as the dropping of a metrically inconcinnate š'wa (*lam-lakim* instead of *lammelakim*, *waihi* instead of *wayehi*, etc.); the pronunciations *ea* for *eha*, *eu* for *ehu*, *n* for *na* (in 2d and 3d plur. fem.), *ak* for *eka* (so also Bickell), *em* for *ehem*; and a number of others. Here rhythmic euphony must decide, and regard must be had to the structure of the line. Sievers is discriminating in the application of metrical laws, and his efforts to explain the historical origin of doublet forms are instructive. He adds a chapter on the utility of rhythmical science in detecting interpolations and additions, such as explanations, explicita, divine names, rhetorical expansions, and repetitions. At the end he gives a number of pieces (among them Canticles and the inscription of Mesha) arranged in what he thinks the proper stichometric form, with

designation of the different meters. The volume is particularly helpful from the great number of examples it gives. Sievers's conclusions are supported by such weighty arguments that they will probably commend themselves to the great mass of readers. But however this may be, he has performed a lasting service by his insistence on precision and clearness—he will have no vagueness or slurring-over. His appeal is to a good ear and common-sense, and the breadth of his learning and his earnestness impart to his exposition a fulness of matter and a warmth of coloring that are not always found in works of this character.

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THE POETICAL PORTIONS OF JEREMIAH.¹

For some reason unknown to the public, it was not deemed best promptly to publish the new edition of Cornill's *Jeremiah* for the Haupt series, and after fifteen months or so of waiting, the distinguished author, with the approval of the editor, determined to issue a special brochure, containing the Hebrew text of the metrical portions of the book. In this we find the following passages with such emendations as are deemed satisfactory by the author: Jer. 1:14–19; 2:2b–3:5; 3:19–25; 4:3–5:12; 5:14–17, 19, 21–31; 6:1–30; 8:5–10a, 13–23; 9:1–22; 10:2–5, 12–14, 16–24; 11:15, 16, 18–23; 12:1–3, 5–13; 13:18–27; 14:2–9, 17–22; 15:5–10, 15–21; 16:19, 20; 17:5–11, 13–18; 18:13–23; 20:7–12, 14–18; 21:13, 14; 22:6, 7, 10, 13–16, 20–23, 28, 30; 23:1–6, 9–17; 30:5–9, 12b–21; 31:1–34; 38:22; 46:2–12, 14–26; 47:1–48:3; 48:6, 10, 11, 14, 16–20, 25, 28, 32, 35, 38, 39, 44, 47; 49:1–5, 7, 8, 10, 11, 23–33, 35–38; 50:2–29, 31–46; 51:1–14, 20–58.

The author alludes in the preface also to detached tetrastichs in 1:10; 7:29; 13:14; 14:10; 16:9; 29:7; 32:14, and to cases where two or three of these are found in proximity in 22:2, 4; 23:22–24; 24:5, 6; 29:11–13. He refers also to the tristich in 1:5 and compares it with the tristichs of 10:2–5, 12–14, 16, which he had included in the body of the work. All other portions, not simply prose, he brings under the head of "rhythmical prose." Consistency seemed to him to demand the latter treatment of 20:14–18, which he arranges in three tetrastichs and two tristichs, but he states that he had not the courage to reject this passage from his metrical parts.

The attempt to arrange these passages in poetic form is a worthy one. So far as they are taken from the Massoretic text, the lines are for the most part not unsuitable; and many emendations having for them the evidence of the LXX are to be adopted. Cornill reaches the conclusion, however, that for the most part the poetry of the book should be grouped in stanzas of eight lines each, and from this conclusion the reviewer must dissent for the following reasons:

¹ DIE METRISCHEN STÜCKE DES BUCHES JEREMIA. Reconstituiert von D. Carl Heinrich Cornill, Professor der Theologie an der Universität Breslau. Leipzig: J. C. Hinrichs'sche Buchhandlung, 1901.